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Letter dated 20 November 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the conclusions of the General Affairs Council of the European Union issued on 20 November 2001, on behalf of the European Union, on Afghanistan (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jean **De Ruyt**
Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 20 November 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Conclusions of the General Affairs Council of the European Union issued on 20 November 2001, on behalf of the European Union, on Afghanistan

The General Affairs Council welcomes the adoption of Security Council resolution 1378 (2001) and reiterates its full support for the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to set up a transitional administration swiftly. The General Affairs Council recalls that such efforts are intended to install in Afghanistan a legitimate, broad-based, multi-ethnic government committed to establishing human rights in Afghanistan. The Union will continue to participate in seeking a political solution.

The General Affairs Council welcomes recent developments on the ground which contribute to achieving the objectives of the international coalition against terrorism. The General Affairs Council confirms its unreserved support for the coalition's action undertaken in self-defence and in conformity with Security Council resolution 1368 (2001). The General Affairs Council calls on the Northern Alliance to exercise restraint in the regions under its control and to do its utmost to further the rapid establishment of a new administration which enjoys national and international support. It also calls on all the Afghan forces to respect human rights and international humanitarian law. The responsible behaviour of the new Afghan leaders in this area will constitute a deciding factor for the aid which the European Union is prepared to provide for the country's reconstruction.

The General Affairs Council stresses the urgency of the Afghan people's humanitarian needs: humanitarian aid remains an absolute priority for the Union. The mobilization and supply of aid will be subject to closer coordination between the member States and the Commission, as well as with specialist humanitarian agencies, the Afghanistan Support Group and non-governmental organizations. Developments in the situation on the ground must be turned to advantage to help refugees and displaced persons.

While recognizing the primary responsibility of the Afghan people in determining its future, the General Affairs Council calls on the United Nations and international financial institutions to devise a plan for the economic, social and institutional reconstruction of Afghanistan also enabling the efforts of the international community to be coordinated effectively. This plan must also promote the role of women in Afghan society. Preparation of this plan with all States and organizations concerned, including the Afghans, will underscore the determination of the international community to work towards the long-term recovery of the country. In this context, the Union will participate actively in the meeting in Washington, D.C., on 20 November.

The General Affairs Council will step up its dialogue with the countries in the region in order to contribute to the region's stability: peace in Afghanistan is a guarantee of security for the entire region.

The General Affairs Council has decided to appoint a Special Representative for Afghanistan. He will work under the authority of the High Representative and will assist the latter and the Presidency in their activities.